

WVL
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SENATOR ALLEN J. ELLENDER

THE ROLE OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

ELLENDER: "None-the-less, we cannot close our eyes to failure. Inexorably linked with the Cuban misadventure are the activities of the CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY, which was established by Congress in 1947.

"The Central Intelligence Agency--or as it is commonly called, the CIA--is empowered to gather, correlate and evaluate intelligence data, and to advise the National Security Council on such matters.

"There appears to be little doubt that this agency was given the specific assignment of obtaining information which would be useful and helpful to the Cuban exiles in this country, as well as in other South and Central American countries, in their attempt to unseat Castro and restore order in Cuba. Obviously, however, secrecy was not maintained by those in charge, or else there must have been an effective counter-intelligence movement, since Castro knew in advance exactly where the landing was to take place, the number of persons involved, the time, and all details of the invasion. In addition, the rebels in Cuba were not properly advised. As a result, the whole operation was a dismal failure.

"The CIA has long been subject to criticism by both branches of the Congress. Its method of operation has never been disclosed to members of Congress. Its budget has never been made public, and it makes no accounting to the people of its expenditures. As a matter of fact, even members of the Appropriations Committees of both houses of Congress who provide the funds are not informed of the expenditures made by this agency.

"It is my belief that because of the fiasco in Cuba, some steps will be taken to reorganize the agency. The President has appointed a Committee, headed by General Maxwell D. Taylor, former Army Chief of Staff, to conduct an investigation into the reasons for the failure of the Cuban incident. I believe the time has come for Congress to review the methods, activities and expenditures of this organization. The nation cannot afford failures that could be far more tragic than Cuba. If, as has been rumored, the CIA furnished misleading and faulty information to President Kennedy and also assumed the responsibility to plan this action in Cuba, then a good, hard look at the operations of the CIA is necessary."